United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 30, 2009

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
United States Capitol, Room S-128
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
United States Capitol, Room S-146A
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Financial Services and
General Government
133 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Financial Services and
General Government
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

As the Committee begins its consideration of the FY10 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, we are writing to request support for the following projects. **Please note that these projects are in no particular order.**

Project: Equipping the University of Oregon Lewis Integrative Science Building
Requestor: University of Oregon, Eugene, OR
Account: Small Business Administration
Amount Requested: $540,000
Description: This project would fund technological and equipment aspects of the next phase of the University of Oregon's Lorry I. Lokey Integrative Science Complex. The new facility, known as the Robert and Beverly Lewis Integrative Science Building, will enhance UO's existing capacity as a "high tech" extension service for Oregon industry and beyond. The facility will provide specialized laboratories as well as major research instrumentation and research laboratories for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and other brain imaging technologies, genomics and proteomics, microscopy, materials and chemical analysis, and advanced computation. This project would include purchase of materials, equipment and instrumentation.

The purpose of the project is to ensure high quality efficient facilities are available to university researchers and private sector partners. The proposed federal project taps more than $60 million in already secured public and private investment. The project directly connects with and supports the further development of "cluster" areas that are identified by the Oregon Business Plan as state priorities.

Outreach efforts involving the medical community and applications of biomedicine will be fostered by the availability of this advanced research facility. It also enhances the university's capacity to serve as a high tech extension service, particularly in the area of nanomaterials characterization, materials research and green (nano) materials.

Project: Downtown Revitalization "Toolbox" Program
Requestor: City of Salem, Oregon
Account: Small Business Administration
Amount Requested: $540,000
Description: In 2003, the downtown core of Salem, Oregon had over 100,000 square feet of vacant space. The majority of the vacant space was located in five large vacant historic buildings which had previously been department stores. By leveraging funding sources, Salem has been able to reduce building vacancies.

A thirty-six member downtown task force, in conjunction with the Downtown Development Advisory Board, developed a set of financial incentives to encourage property owners to undertake redevelopment of their buildings, which they titled the "Toolbox" program. The "Toolbox" program contains a variety of financial incentives to encourage revitalization, preservation of historic buildings and new construction within the downtown core. Programs include interior and exterior matching grant funds, below market interest rate commercial loans, and special housing opportunity funds to encourage development of all types of housing in the downtown core.

Toolbox funds can be used to address code violations, ADA accessibility and seismic upgrades, environmental mitigation, energy efficient upgrades, and new construction. Recent program revisions encourage redevelopment of vacant and underutilized second floor space for start-up businesses and artists in our community. This program has successfully been used to renovate and preserve over 30 buildings in the downtown historic district of Salem. In addition, Toolbox funds have been used to create 35 for-rent housing units in the downtown core.

Project: Experience Works Oregon Small Business Employment Assistance Program
Requestor: Experience Works, Salem, OR
Account: Small Business Administration
Amount Requested: $350,000
Description: Experience Works has found that small businesses often face challenges in competing with larger corporations for skilled employees. It has discovered that the answer to this dilemma often lies in hiring skilled older workers. Because of the recession, older workers need assistance to develop and match their skills to the needs of employers now more than ever.

To address this challenge, Experience Works created a successful pilot program in 22 states, the Small Business Employment Assistance Program (SBEAP). SBEAP matches skilled older workers with new and expanding small employers, helping both local businesses be more competitive and job seekers find well-paying employment. This program received the 2007 U.S. Department of Labor's Recognition of Excellence Award in recognition of its effectiveness.

Employers have enthusiastically supported the SBEAP, with 92% of employers participating in the program rating it as "excellent." Funding would expand this pilot program to the State of Oregon and expect to connect 200 older workers with small businesses in need of talented workers.

Project: Science Research and Teaching Complex
Requestor: Portland State University, Portland, OR
Account: Small Business Administration
Amount Requested: $540,000
Description: Access to high-quality science education and research is critical to the region's economic, environmental, and physical wellbeing. At PSU, however, Science Building 2 (SB2), completed in the early 1970s, remains the newest science building on campus. It is poorly ventilated, lacks quality water, and many of its fume hoods do not work properly. Its labs are drab and worn.

This project would add thirty or more years to SB2's useful life at a cost far below that of new construction. It would fully renovate 52 laboratories, add a 200-seat classroom, create a new hazardous materials facility, modernize the building's exterior, and create interactive exhibits in the lobby to engage the public. It would dramatically increase science research and teaching at PSU, including the following:

- 23% increase in faculty (95 FTE to 117 FTE)
- 19% increase in science majors (2,100 to 2,500)
- 64% increase in research funding ($11 Million to $18 Million)
- 157% increase in doctoral degrees granted (7 to 18 annually)
- Continued growth in the partnership between PSU and OHSU to conduct research and train health care professionals to address the looming shortage of physicians in Oregon.

Feasibility studies and design began in 2005. The Oregon Legislature approved deferred maintenance and general obligation bonds in 2007. PSU has secured an additional $7.2 million in funding for the project since that time. The first phase of renovations has just begun.

Project: Sustainable Careers for a Green Economic Recovery
Requestor: Portland Community College, Portland, OR
Account: Small Business Administration
Amount Requested: $540,000
Description: Sustainable Oregon industries need a skilled green-collar workforce, and Oregon residents need long-term sustainable jobs that pay a living wage. The Portland Community College (PCC) Sustainable Careers for a Green Economic Recovery program will provide intensive job training in the critical areas of alternative energy, green construction, maintenance, design, and alternative fuel technologies, including developing curriculum, offering training classes, and purchasing specialized equipment. PCC serves a five-county area (Washington, Multnomah, Columbia, Yamhill, and Clackamas Counties). PCC's Sustainable Careers for a Green Economic Recovery program will:

Expand the renewable energy training option within PCC's Electronic Engineering Technology Program, and train 30 new students each year for family wage jobs as renewable energy technicians.

- Add a new building commissioner training option to PCC's Facilities Maintenance Technology Program and train 100 workers each year.
- Add a green roof/wall training option to PCC's Building Construction and Landscape Technology programs and train 60 workers per year in green construction and maintenance.
- Expand the sustainable building certificate option within PCC's Architectural Design and Drafting program and train 85 students each year in green building design.
- Expand the alternative fuels training option within PCC's automotive technician program and train 60 students each year in hybrid and plug-in vehicle technology.
- Implement a Green Jobs Training Program for Oregon high school students, training 30 students each year in Renewable Energy and Solar Voltaic Manufacturing.
- Develop additional green technology training options in emerging fields.

Additionally, we certify that neither ourselves' nor our immediate family have a pecuniary interest, consistent with the requirements of Paragraph 9 of rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, in any congressionally directed spending item that we requested in this letter.

Thank you for your consideration of these worthy projects. We appreciate your strong and continued leadership and look forward to working with you this year on funding vital to our nation.

Sincerely,

Ron Wyden
United States Senator

Jeff Merkley
United States Senator